

Don't allow them to destroy July 4th

LAST YEAR the July 4 weekend was a big one throughout the United States with the Bicentennial celebration. In LIFELand it was particularly noteworthy with many festivities planned by local government. Local residents celebrated the Bicentennial in many and varied ways, all noting the historic impact of the day, yet still managing to have some fun.

We hope that this July 4 can be the same, despite the possible intrusion of Frank Collin and his band of neo-Nazis. We understand the disgust that fills Skokie (and all LIFELand) residents when they think of these uniformed creeps marching down Oakton street. We feel the same contempt. But despite that feeling, we urge you all to go about your July 4 business without "looking in" on the Nazi demonstration on Oakton street, if that demonstration takes place.

The situation for this second attempt by the Nazis to march in Skokie has escalated well beyond the point of public safety. The Nazis promise more uniformed marchers than the 30 who were turned away on April 30, and the planned counter-demonstrators surely will be more numerous than those on hand to direct them in April

Meir Kahane, leader of the militant Jewish Defense league (JDL), has added fuel to an already volatile situation with his promises of violence if the Nazis march. Just what his stake is in the future of this community remains hazy to us. We think it is quite likely that

Kahane will forget Skokie even exists after this Nazi situation cools down.

Our appeal for July 4 is a simple one: Do anything you would normally do on a July 4, but stay away from the Nazis. 'We don't know whether there will be any Nazis marching on July 4. If there are, we hope that the responsible and thinking citizens of Skokie understand that this small band of immature and foolish attention seekers can only cause harm if we elevate their importance.

There are some in this community and elsewhere who believe that this march is symbolic of some sort of Nazi resurgence in the United States. We think that idea is patently ridiculous and that is why we urge you to greet the Nazis with empty streets. When the JDL says "never again," we can wholeheartedly agree with that statement. We too believe that the holocaust should never be allowed to happen again. Every humane person, Jew and non-Jew, believes that. We see the laws that safeguard human rights in this country as the ultimate tools to prevent the conditions that spawned the destruction of Jews in Germany. We do not see fighting in the streets as the answer.

July 4 represents too important a day for all of us in this country to let a Frank Collin and his few followers distort its meaning. Don't let him and his henchmen dictate how you celebrate our freedom.